



State of Illinois
Illinois Department of Transportation

IDOT Annual Report

2015



Illinois Department
of Transportation



On cover: Construction of a new bridge over the Chain of Rocks Canal spanning from St. Louis, Missouri to Madison, Illinois.

Above: IDOT's Leisa Laster illustrates the concept of specific gravity by comparing the density of common kitchen items to the density of water at District 4 (Peoria) during IDOT's Take our Daughters and Sons to Work Day.

Back cover: Bicycle and pedestrian bridge over I-57 and I-70 in Effingham, Illinois. The bridge provides a safe route for pedestrians and bicyclists and access to multi-use trails in the Effingham area.

A Message from the Secretary



As my first year as Secretary comes to an end, I am pleased to report that in 2015 the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) took on a number of innovative projects that illustrate IDOT's commitment to being a truly multimodal agency.

Illinois has one of the most diverse, multimodal transportation systems in the nation. A system that includes the fourth-largest roadway system, third-largest interstate system, second-largest rail freight system, third-largest public transportation system, a growing intercity passenger rail network, and one of the busiest airport systems in the world.

As we look to the future and the changing demographics of our communities, we must proactively develop solutions that meet the transportation needs of the public. Whether your preference is walking, biking, driving, taking transit, or passenger rail, IDOT is committed to achieving a balance of modes.

We must make smart choices and show the taxpayers of Illinois the benefits they receive from having a well-connected, efficient transportation network – after all, it is our transportation network that drives our economy.

In the end, transportation is a strategy that will help us achieve our goals of growing Illinois' economy and improving quality of life for residents of Illinois. I look forward to working with the people of Illinois to ensure that we are performing to the highest standard and I ask for your partnership as we grow Illinois' economy together.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randall S. Blankenhorn". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a white background.

Randall S. Blankenhorn
Secretary
Illinois Department of Transportation



Your contribution to Illinois' highway and bridge system:

- \$78 IDOT portion of the annual passenger vehicle registration
- + \$125** Estimated annual gas tax (*estimated 25 miles per gallon and drive 15,000 miles annually*)
- \$203** Amount the average driver pays annually to maintain our highways and bridges via gas tax and vehicle registration fees

Who We Are and What We Do

Mission and Values

The Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT) mission is to provide safe, cost-effective transportation for Illinois in ways that enhance quality of life and promote economic prosperity while demonstrating respect for our environment. As IDOT works to achieve this mission, it is critical that the department uphold the following principles as a hallmark of all our work: safety, integrity, diversity, responsiveness, quality and innovation.

About IDOT

- In the 2015 fiscal year, IDOT's operating budget was nearly \$2.8 billion.
- IDOT programmed more than \$3.2 billion in capital projects, improving 1,379 miles of pavement and 188 bridges, and completed 121 safety improvements.
- IDOT awarded a total of \$3 billion in highway contracts and obligations, including construction, engineering and land acquisition.
- Nearly 5,000 employees statewide.
- Emergency Traffic Patrol (ETP) assisted 108,041 motorists in northeastern Illinois in 2015.
- IDOT used 458.1 tons of road salt and spent \$7.17 million on snow and ice removal.
- IDOT opened Illinois' first protected bike lane on a state route this year in the City of Chicago.

Engagement

- More than 220,000 people engaged on social media in 2015:
 - 33,000 Twitter followers.
 - 31,000 Facebook followers.
 - 5,300 annual inquiries received through IDOT's online comment form.
- 1,150 households participated in the IDOT Annual Traveler Survey.
 - 61 percent of respondents in 2015 said that IDOT is "very important" to their area's economy.
 - 60 percent of respondents say that IDOT is "very important" to their area's overall quality of life.
 - When asked about capital needs, the public believes repairing or upgrading aging and deteriorating bridges and highways are the highest priority.
- Getting Around Illinois, a web-based interactive mapping site, allows users to find information on winter road conditions, traffic, road construction, trucking routes, and planned road projects. This past winter, the road conditions map received over 2.2 million visitors and nearly 4.8 million page views.
- IDOT engaged over 4,000 residents online and in person during the department's spring Listening Tour.

Illinois: The Transportation Hub of North America

- The state of Illinois boasts the nation's third-largest road network with more than 146,700 lane miles of state and local roads, behind Texas and California, respectively.
- Illinois is served by all seven Class 1 railroads, the only state that can make that claim.
- 1.26 billion tons of freight travels throughout Illinois annually – the third most in the country.
- 63 percent, or 797 million, tons of freight are moved by trucks.
- There are 26,667 bridges in Illinois, the third-largest inventory in the country.
- There are 57 transit systems across Illinois.
- Amtrak served 2.3 million passengers in Illinois in 2015.
- Illinois stands at the juncture of the Ohio and Mississippi river systems, and the Illinois River is the only connection between the Great Lakes and the Gulf of Mexico.



Interstate 55 and Lake Shore Drive

Construction started in the spring on the \$133 million project to rebuild all of the ramps and bridges linking Interstate 55 and Lake Shore Drive. The current work involves rebuilding the outbound ramps and bridges, with an estimated completion date of fall 2016. The second phase of the project involves rebuilding the inbound ramps and bridges. The entire project is expected to wrap up in late 2017.

Interstate 55 and Lake Shore Drive reconstruction.

Safety






- 2015 is the first year since 1998 that Illinois had ZERO workers killed in work zones.
- Seat belt usage is among the nation's highest at 95.5 percent.
 - Males age 18-34 are the highest abusers of seat belt misuse.
- In 2015, there were 931 fatal crashes with 1,015 fatalities – 92 more fatalities than in 2014.
- Seat belts were not used or improperly used in 23 percent of fatalities.

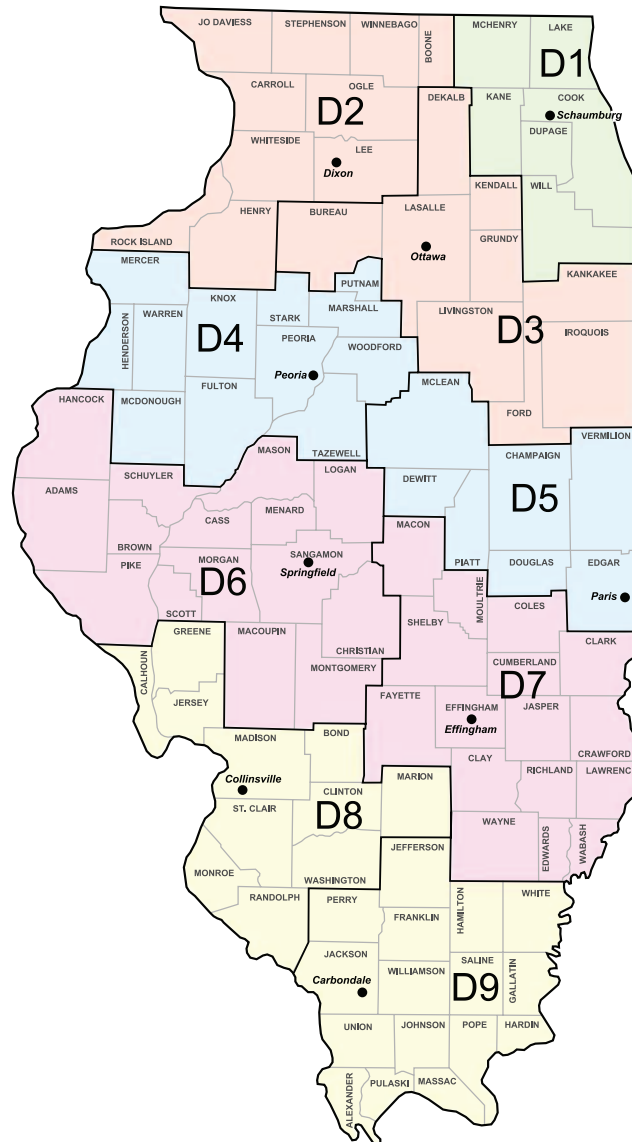
Sustainability

- Approximately 1,000 tons of rubber is recycled from tires collected along roadways.
- IDOT's sign shops recycled and reused more than 50,000 aluminum road signs.
- IDOT installed a wind turbine at the Krisdala Baka Rest Area on the westbound side of I-74, near Woodhull in Henry County. The turbine is scheduled to be in operation by spring 2016.
- IDOT made 46 improvements to its facilities to support sustainability. Projects include: white roofing, upgrades to lighting, HVAC systems, electrical, plumbing and windows.

Organization

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Aerial image of the Jane Byrne Interchange pre-construction.

2015 Project Highlights

IDOT is an economic engine for the state, investing billions of dollars to build, support and maintain modern and efficient roadways, railways, airports, transit, bicycle and pedestrian systems. The agency's core mission is to provide safe and cost-effective transportation options throughout the state, which serves as the transportation hub of North America. The department annually produces a multiyear, multimodal transportation improvement program that outlines the maintenance and capital needs for one of the country's most robust transportation systems. Projects highlighted below include work that was completed in 2015 and projects that are significantly underway today.

Highways

Jane Byrne Interchange

Consistently ranked as one of the nation's worst bottlenecks, the reconstruction of the Jane Byrne Interchange – connecting Interstates 90, 94, 290 and Congress Parkway in Chicago – made significant progress over the last year. Ground was broken in the spring on a new flyover bridge linking Interstate 90/94 with Interstate 290. This phase of the project will be complete in late 2016. The overall \$600 million interchange project is anticipated to be complete in 2020, providing improved safety, traffic flow and travel times.

The Jane Byrne Interchange is critical to the nation's transportation system, particularly for freight movement on interstate and arterial roadways. Of the more than 400,000 vehicles per day, 33,000 are trucks; this traffic significantly impacts roadway capacity and levels of service.

Benefits include:

- Delays reduced by up to 50 percent.
- 5 million fewer annual hours of drivers sitting in traffic.
- Savings of up to 1.6 million gallons of gas annually.
- Save more than \$185 million annually in lost work production for delayed travelers.

Meredosia Bridge

Progress is continuing on a replacement for the 75-year-old bridge that carries Illinois 104 across the Illinois River in Meredosia. The \$75 million project is expected to be open in 2018. This is the first tied-arch bridge undertaken by IDOT in decades.

Clybourn Avenue Protected Bike Lanes

The Clybourn Avenue protected bike lanes project is one of the more innovative projects IDOT unveiled in 2015. Built in partnership with the Chicago Department of Transportation, this project created the first protected bike lanes on an Illinois state route, further demonstrating IDOT's commitment to increasing travel choices and improving mobility by providing more options for bicyclists and pedestrians. The project added a raised concrete median, creating a buffer between bikes and vehicles.



"The new interchange design might seem a little different at first, but I am confident that motorists will quickly see the benefits. This project is a great example of the type of innovation that the Illinois Department of Transportation is looking to embrace far into the future."

- Secretary Blankenhorn

Aerial image of the Diverging Diamond Interchange at Illinois 59 and the Reagan Memorial Tollway (Interstate 88) in Naperville.

Diverging Diamond Interchanges

In 2015, the first interchanges done in a modern diverging diamond-style design opened in Illinois, improving traffic flow and safety at both locations. The first diverging diamond interchange opened last summer at Interstate 57 and Illinois 13 in Marion. The project was constructed by the Village of Marion, with engineering guidance from IDOT. The second interchange was constructed by IDOT at Illinois 59 and the Reagan Memorial Tollway (Interstate 88). It opened in September as part of the larger project to reconstruct and widen Illinois 59 through Aurora and Naperville. The new interchange accommodates pedestrians and bicyclists by guiding them through the center of the interchange on a shared, multiuse path.

Among the safety benefits:

- Fewer conflicts at ramp intersections. Each conflict point represents a potential crash. Total interchange area conflict points were reduced from 26 to 14. IDOT will be tracking data on crashes to study the benefits to diverging diamond interchange in Illinois first-hand.
- Safer access to and from the interchange. The design forces traffic to reduce speeds through the interchange and virtually eliminates wrong-way ramp entry.
- Safe pedestrian crossing. Shorter crossings for pedestrians and bicyclists, exposure to traffic is reduced.

Interstate 55 Managed Lanes

I-55 is no longer capable of meeting the region's needs. It currently handles 170,000 vehicles a day and is growing – 250,000 a day are expected by 2040. Included in this number are a lot of trucks – about 15 percent of all traffic – hauling freight in and out of Chicago. The situation is bad. I-55 is congested up to 10 hours a day on average. To address these challenges, IDOT is currently undergoing a study of alternatives for expanding the corridor to better meet motorist and freight demands. In 2015, IDOT held a public open house to get feedback from the public to narrow down the preferred option to pursue going forward. A final decision likely will be made later 2016, contingent on approval from the Federal Highway Administration.

A joint resolution has been submitted in the General Assembly to proceed with this project as a public-private partnership, a P3. A 2011 state law allows IDOT to build, finance, operate, and maintain highway projects using public-private partnerships, as long as the General Assembly adopts a resolution in support of the project. That law is modeled on best practices from across the country and includes opportunities for public hearings and input. While managed lanes have been successful in other states as P3s, the I-55 project would be a first for Illinois.

I-74 Improvements in Tazewell County

Work is expected to be completed summer 2016 on the \$86 million project to improve Interstate 74 in Tazewell County. The overall project includes: reconstruction of the I-74/I-155 interchange, reconfiguration of the I-74/Morton Avenue interchange, addition of new lanes to I-74, ramp improvements, installation of highway lighting, and installation of roadway drainage. This project is bringing roads and ramps up to current design standards improving safety and mobility.



Revitalized Amtrak station in Galesburg.

Public and Intermodal Transit

High-Speed Rail

The Illinois High-Speed Rail program is upgrading the Chicago-to-St. Louis rail corridor to provide passenger service at up to 110 mph, leading to shorter travel times, increased reliability and safety, as well as upgraded or new stations. In 2015, considerable engineering and construction work took place, including station design and site preparation, installation of sidings and double track, improvements to existing bridges and structures, installation of new roadway surfaces, and improved at-grade rail crossings. Construction also began at stations in Dwight and Alton. Demolition of a portion of the Lincoln station was completed, which will allow rehabilitation of that station to begin. Major construction accomplishments in 2015 include the completion and opening of 9 miles of new double track in Girard as well improvements to bridges in Bloomington, Springfield, and Joliet.

Significant construction will take place in 2016. Safety and equipment upgrades will be overseen by IDOT at 20 crossings along the corridor. In Wilmington, key bridges will be reconstructed, including the Kankakee River bridge. There will also be major work on a number of stations along the corridor. Finally, new locomotives as part of a multistate procurement are expected to begin arriving in 2016.

CREATE

The Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program is a public-private partnership between the U.S. Department of Transportation, the State of Illinois, the City of Chicago, Metra, Amtrak and the nation's freight railroads. CREATE's mission is to improve the safety and efficiency of the region's passenger and freight rail infrastructure, while advancing the local quality of life by reducing traffic delays, increasing safety and improving air quality. Of the 70 projects in CREATE, 25 are complete, nine are under construction, two are in the final engineering phase, 15 are in preliminary engineering, and 19 remain unfunded and have yet to be initiated.

A major CREATE project located in Chicago's Englewood community, the Englewood Flyover, is nearly complete. The Englewood Flyover removes a conflict point between commuter, passenger and freight trains, eliminating 7,500 annual passenger hours of delay for commuters and Amtrak's most severe delay point in the Midwest. This project will also increase commuter track capacity for future service. The final phase of the flyover is scheduled to be complete in mid-2016.

Galesburg Amtrak Station

Originally built in 1984, the Galesburg Amtrak Station provides passenger service via four westbound trains and four eastbound trains daily. The Carl Sandburg and Illinois Zephyr routes provide service between Chicago and Quincy, while the California Zephyr and the Southwest Chief routes provide service from Chicago to San Francisco and Los Angeles, respectively. In 2015, this station received a full renovation, which included an enclosure of the station's south end to provide space for a new ticket counter, an office for an inter-city bus carrier and an expanded waiting area. The station now has an additional entrance that complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act.



Did You Know...

To maintain a safe airport system, the department conducted more than 200 safety inspections at landing facilities. IDOT's aviation experts also conducted approximately 20 seminars for pilots and aircraft mechanics across Illinois in 2015.

Aircraft Parking Apron Rehabilitation at the Chicago-Romeoville Airport in Romeoville.

Aviation

The Illinois aviation system consists of nearly 830 landing facilities. These facilities include commercial service, reliever and general aviation airports, private landing areas and hospital heliports. Funding and technical assistance for the state's system of public airports are provided through the Federal Aviation Administration's Airport Improvement Program. For the last year, the Division of Aeronautics received and administered 36 grants through the program, totaling more than \$87 million. Among the highlights were the \$7.1 million installation of an engineered materials arresting system (EMAS) to prevent runway excursions at Chicago Executive Airport in Wheeling and Prospect Heights, and a \$5.3 million runway reconstruction at Coles County Airport in Mattoon.

Chicago Executive Airport (PWK)

The Chicago Executive Airport (PWK), a reliever airport to O'Hare International Airport, is one of the busiest in the state. Located in both Wheeling and Prospect Heights, this facility accommodates large corporate jet aircraft on a 5,000 foot runway. PWK is landlocked on all sides and runway extensions are not possible, therefore, the required safety areas at the end of the primary runway are satisfied by employing what is known as EMAS (engineered materials arresting system). EMAS is designed to safely stop an aircraft that over- or under-shoots the end of the runway. The \$7.1 million EMAS project at the end of Runway 16 was completed in 2015.

Chicago-Romeoville Airport

The Chicago-Romeoville Airport saw the completion of the aircraft parking apron rehabilitation in 2015. The main apron is the single-most important terminal facility at the airport, allowing visiting aircraft access to the terminal building complex and the greater community. The frequency of use by heavy corporate aircraft (those more than 60,000 pounds) has increased over the past 15 years, thus requiring improvement to the existing apron area. This project increased capacity for short-term parking and will help alleviate congestion in the access of both runways at the airport.



“On behalf of our more than 1,300 carrier members, many of whom do business in Illinois, we sincerely thank you, your colleagues, IDOT and the Tollway for your tremendous efforts to make the process to obtain and move on oversize/overweight permits more efficient. In doing so, you have maintained safety/integrity of your infrastructure AND reduced transportation costs for Illinois based manufactures and industry. Effectively, Illinois has transformed its image in the specialized transportation industry from one of a barrier/obstacle to one of a leader in the nation.”

-Steven Todd, Vice President, Specialized Carriers & Rigging Association

Attendees at a spring IDOT Listening Tour stop.

Achievements

In 2015, IDOT spoke to constituents about finding solutions that improve quality of life and the local economy. Our expert staff took on ground-breaking research to help save lives. We engaged youth on careers in transportation and staff found ways to save customers' time and money. These are a few of the projects that highlight IDOT's leadership and ongoing efforts to innovate.

IDOT Listening Tour

In May, IDOT staff embarked on statewide listening tour to engage the public and key stakeholders on transportation priorities for Illinois. IDOT held 39 meetings with more than 4,000 individuals participating in person or through an online survey. The 2,700 individuals who attended meetings in person represented industry, business, civic, and elected leaders from across the state. Time and time again, IDOT staff were told that infrastructure plays a vital role in people's lives and is critical to making Illinois a place where people want to raise a family, work and do business. We also heard that we need to make wise investments with our limited resources, and that those investments should enhance the local economy and improve quality of life. Other key takeaways from the listening tour included: the current state of our infrastructure is not acceptable; infrastructure concerns are multimodal; greater investment is needed; and IDOT has room to improve in project delivery and collaboration with partners.

Performance Measures Workshop

IDOT hosted a workshop on performance measures provided by the Governors' Institute for Community Design and Transportation for America. The workshop – Choosing the Highest Value Transportation Projects – presented staff with examples of how other states are using performance driven goals to select transportation projects. Transportation leaders from Oregon, Tennessee, and Virginia shared their states' project selection processes to help them become more transparent, meet local needs and priorities, and advance the goals of their departments.

Streamlined Truck Permitting

Processing crossroad bridge permits for super loads between IDOT and the Illinois Tollway became easier in 2015 when IDOT announced the incorporation of the database of Tollway bridges into the Illinois Transportation Automated Permit (ITAP) system. With this information, IDOT can process the route quickly and efficiently through one permit. Prior to this innovation, trucking firms needed to request super load permits from two different sources. Analysis and issuance of permits was time consuming and labor intensive for IDOT, the Tollway and trucking firms. The Tollway had been averaging about 300 permits a month or 3,600 a year. Through an agreement with the Tollway, IDOT will adopt the data and issue permits automatically as if the structure was owned by IDOT. This new process increases safety and accuracy and saves the customers time and money. By allowing the customers to select their own routes and to see where the weight restrictions are along their route allows them the freedom to immediately select another route for their load, which ultimately results in a faster turnaround time for permit issuance.

Illinois Unmanned Aerial System Oversight Task Force

Established by Public Act 99-392 (20 ILCS 5065/), IDOT serves as the chair of Illinois Unmanned Aerial System Oversight Task Force. Established by the General Assembly and Gov. Bruce Rauner to provide oversight and input in creating comprehensive laws and rules for the operation and use of drone technology within Illinois, subject to federal oversight and regulation. The task force will study and make recommendations for the operation, usage, and regulation of Unmanned Aerial Systems in Illinois. Comprehensive recommendations for the safe and lawful operation of UAS will be submitted to the governor and General Assembly by July 1, 2016.



"The Highway Construction Careers Training Program gives people the tools to embark on a life-long career in transportation. IDOT is committed to creating job opportunities for minorities across Illinois."

-Pamela Simon, Director, Office of Business and Workforce Diversity (OBWD)

South Suburban College 2015 Highway Construction Careers Training Program (HCCTP) graduating class.

Rosa Parks Award

IDOT's Diversity Recruitment and Outreach staff received the 2015 Rosa Parks Award from the Chicagoland Chapter of the Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS). The award recognizes IDOT for contributing significantly to promoting diversity, inclusion and multicultural awareness within the transportation industry. IDOT partnered with WTS Chicago to develop a new Transportation YOU pilot program targeted at young women ages 13-18 to share information about transportation careers.

Highway Construction Careers Training Program

In collaboration with the Federal Highway Administration, IDOT initiated Highway Construction Careers Training Program (HCCTP) in late 2009, in an effort to increase access to highway construction jobs for minorities, women, and disadvantaged individuals. HCCTP emphasizes life-long learning and provides opportunities for further education and assistance to improve employability in Illinois' highway construction industry. The program is a joint partnership between IDOT, the Illinois Community College Board and 12 community colleges throughout the state. In 2015, 317 individuals graduated from the HCCTP program – among the highest numbers of graduates since the program began.

National Summer Training Institute

IDOT participates in the National Summer Training Institute (NSTI), a federally-funded camp that exposes Illinois students in 8th to 10th grades to transportation, math and engineering curriculums. The program culminates with a presentation of student projects to officials from the Federal Aviation Administration, IDOT, and other transportation professionals. This year, students who completed the program had the opportunity to receive 30 minutes of in-air flight instruction.

National AASHTO Conference

Illinois was host to the 2015 American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) 2015 national conference. More than 750 people attended the conference including representatives from highway and transportation departments from across the 50 states, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

Driving Dead

IDOT works closely with the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) to develop targeted safety campaigns – as the vast majority of highway fatalities are avoidable. The goal of The Driving Dead campaign was to reach the state's largest segment of seat belt abusers who are endangering their own lives and the lives of others – young men between the ages of 18-34. With Michael Rooker, an Illinois native from the hit TV show The Walking Dead as the face and voice of the campaign, The Driving Dead allowed IDOT to connect with a particular audience that can be difficult to reach. This campaign produced a series of four short videos that had more than 3.3 million views on YouTube and counting. Of those, more than 2.7 million viewers were from Illinois, 94 percent were male and 85 percent were between the ages of 18-34.

Traffic Incident Training Guide

IDOT received the 2015 "Sweet Sixteen" Research Award for the development of a Traffic Incident Management Operational and Training Guide by the AASHTO. The goal of this project was to reduce responder fatalities and injuries, and prevent secondary crashes. Staff developed training materials to help incident responders work safely. To date, more than 4,000 responders from law enforcement, fire and rescue, transportation, and the towing and recovery sectors have been trained, and nearly 500 have registered for online training. The impact is expected to result in a decrease in responder injuries and fatalities and a reduction in travel time related to congestion caused by these incidents.

